

THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY.

VOL. I.

APRIL, 1921.

No. 4.

“Unless I Am Overcome with Testimonies of Holy Scripture.”

PROF. W. H. T. DAU, St. Louis, Mo.

A number of conflicting interests were represented at the German Diet at Worms which was opened January 28, 1521, and closed May 25, but none could compare, as regards dignity and practical importance, with the two interests which clashed in the great hall of the *Bischofshof* as the sun was setting April 18. The dusk of evening that was dimming the splendor of that gorgeous scene was prophetic of the gloom that was settling on a false principle of authority in religion; the lone figure that stood before the tribunal of earth's mightiest Caesar and calmly voiced his determination not to yield to the order of an autocrat in an affair of conscience, was a flaming torch, typifying the “light at eventide”¹⁾ of which the prophet spoke. The empty seats of Aleander and Caraccioli, the papal nuntii, at that session of the Diet were a practical confession of their inability to match their man-supported claims of power against the God-given power which sustains the confessor of God's Word. Numerically, the odds were against *Luther*; spiritually, *Rome's* case was hopeless. The man with the Bible represents the true majority.

The division between Luther and the Curia had been drawn in ever sharper lines since the day when the Wittenberg professor had modestly raised the question: By what right is forgiveness of sin sold? During the forty months, until Luther started on his memorable journey to Worms, the question had been debated by the best talent that Rome could oppose to Luther; Luther had stood his ground against each of them, and as his knowledge of Rome's principle in the argument widened, his conviction that the

1) Zech. 14, 7.

principle was essentially false had gained in intensity. From the original questions that had been cast up: What is an indulgence? What is purgatory? What is a penance? What is repentance? etc., Luther had advanced to the *sola Scriptura* principle of authority in matters of faith. The concluding statement of his speech before the Diet sums up the conviction which had been matured in his mind during eighteen years of intensive Bible-study, two-thirds of which time he had spent in spiritual slavery to monasticism and in mental slavery to scholasticism.

"If the day," says Walther, "on which Luther published his Ninety-five Theses against the abomination of papal indulgences can, in a way, be called the birthday of the Reformation, the day on which Luther — in 1503 — for the first time held in his hand the entire Bible might well be called the day of its conception." ²⁾ A happy thought! Luther's discovery of a copy of the complete Bible in the library of the University at Erfurt was greater than the discovery of America by Columbus which had occurred a decade sooner: the mariner of Genoa gave back to the world a lost continent; the friar of Wittenberg reopened to men the spiritual world of truth and righteousness and the royal highway to heaven in Christ. Luther's find in 1503 has occasionally been overemphasized by enthusiastic orators. Luther had, of course, known of the existence of the Bible even in his boyhood, and had heard and learned by heart portions of it. It had always been to him the revelation of God. But not until his days at the university did the Bible begin to be to him the exclusive source of infallible truth and the touchstone by which he tested all that he heard and read for its content of truth. A remark of one of his professors, Jodocus Trutfetter ("Dr. Eisenach"), aided him greatly towards a true estimate of the authority of Scripture. In 1518, when Trutfetter had become very bitter against Luther, whom he regarded as a precocious upstart in theology, Luther reminds his former teacher of a truth that he had learned from him: "If you will bear with the boldness of a pupil and a most obedient servant of yours, namely, myself, I would like to say that you are the first person from whom I learned that we are to yield faith only to the canonical writings, while we are to use all the rest critically, as the blessed Augustine, yea, Paul and John command." ³⁾

2) Dr. Walther, in *L. u. W.*, 1882, p. 49. To this article we are indebted for a number of the references that show the development of Luther's Biblicism.

3) XV, 413.

One reason why Luther entered the cloister in 1505 was, because he hoped to obtain in the seclusion of the monastery that leisure for searching the Scriptures for which his bruised spirit was yearning. And one reason why the canonical duties of his order became so irksome to him was, because the canonical hours, the cloister chores, and the begging excursions in which he had to engage took him away from his Bible. He became a genius in finding time for his Bible amid the routine of cloister-life; to his colleagues he was a Bibliomaniac. His brother monk and former teacher at the university, Bartholomew von Usingen, one day reproved Luther when he found him again poring over the Latin Bible bound in red leather which has since become famous, and said: "Bah, Brother Martin, what is the Bible! We must read the old teachers; they have extracted the quintessence of the truth from the Bible." ⁴⁾

For years, however, Luther's view of the authority of Scripture had remained encumbered with a baneful inconsistency: his reverence for the Roman Church and the authority of the Pope. There were occasions when he felt distracted over the discovery that Roman theology and Bible teaching clashed. He was anxiously casting about for means to harmonize the difference. He was wavering between the Roman *fides implicita* and the Christian *fides explicita*. He described his state of mind in this period in 1538, in the preface to a collection of theses for theological debates: "Many good men extolled my Theses, but it was impossible for me to acknowledge them to be the Church and instruments of the Holy Ghost. I looked up to the Pope, the cardinals, the bishops, the theologians, the jurists, the monks, and expected the Spirit from them. For I had gorged and filled myself with their teaching to such an extent that I did not realize whether I was asleep or waking. And after I had overcome all arguments with the Scriptures, I could in the end, even with the grace of Christ, scarcely get over this one point, except with the greatest difficulty and anguish, viz., that we must hear the Church. For the Church of the Pope I regarded (and that with all my heart!) as the true Church, with much greater stubbornness and reverence than these abominable parasites are doing who are nowadays glorifying the Church of the Pope to spite me. If I had despised the Pope as his eulogizers are now doing, I would have believed that the earth must swallow me up that very minute, as it did Korah and his followers. But,

4) Walch, XXII, 35.

while waiting for the verdict of the Church and of the Holy Spirit, I was peremptorily ordered to keep silent, and my superiors appealed to the prevailing custom. Frightened by the authority of the name of the Church, I yielded and declared myself ready to Cardinal Cajetan at Augsburg to keep silent, begging him humbly to impose silence also on the clamorous opposition party. But he not only refused my request, but added that if I did not recant, he would condemn me and all my teachings, whatever they might be. But at that time I had already been teaching the Catechism with no little success, and I knew that the Catechism must not be condemned, and that I must not permit this to be done, lest I should deny Christ.⁵⁾

This means that in 1518 Luther was still troubled with the fearful qualms which an erring conscience can create. He was convinced that in his "Catechism," his Christian instruction for laymen, he had proclaimed unalloyed Bible truth, but he did not see that he must go on proclaiming those truths in opposition to papal decisions. The glamor of the Pope's exalted station in the Christian Church overawed him. It was this reflection which wrested from Luther the promise which he gave to Cajetan at Augsburg in 1518, viz., that he would henceforth keep silent, provided his adversaries were enjoined from writing against him. The ruthless insistence of the Cardinal at that time, that Luther must recant everything that he had ever written, is now seen, in the light of later developments, to be an act of the permissive providence of God, by which the antibiblicism of Rome was to be revealed. In the haughty bearing of the Roman prelate Luther had the first taste of the fatal self-consciousness of papal absolutists, who seemed to feel it as a humiliation to be asked to prove any point in their position to an inquirer who questioned the correctness of their position. *Sic volo, sic jubeo; stat pro ratione voluntas*, that was the spirit in which Cajetan met Luther. Luther's criticism of a papal malpractise was never examined as to its intrinsic merit, but was resented *a priori* because it involved doubt or denial of the Pope's supremacy and the finality of his utterances. That explains the remarkable animus displayed by all who entered into debate with Luther. While Luther was discussing a dogmatical question, his opponents were defending the practical issue whether there can be any question raised in regard to anything that the Pope does or permits. Luther at Augsburg still distinguished between the Pope

5) XIV, 452.

and the Church; his opponent had lost all appreciation for such a distinction. Luther's twofold Appeal in 1518, from the Pope ill informed to the Pope to be better informed, and from the Pope to a general council of the Church, drew from well-meaning Catholics a pitying smile. It afforded amusement to the frivolous Italians who were conducting the affairs of the Church. *O sancta simplicitas!* they must have exclaimed when they heard of the action of this *bon Christian* in Germany, that is, of this blooming fool who was indulging in the senseless luxury of having a conscience in religious matters different from the will of their papal master. It roused the fanatical zeal of the great multitude of dependents upon the Curia who made a living, and that, a very good living, by preaching the religion of the Pope. Erasmus, with his extensive knowledge of the world, sized up the situation created by Luther's Theses correctly when he declared that Luther's only crime was that he had touched the Pope's crown and the monks' bellies.

Luther struggled long against admitting this view of the situation as the correct one, at least as far as it involved the person of the Pope. But the inexorable logic of tyrannous practises was forcing the issue step by step to the point at which every autocrat arrives sooner or later, the appeal to physical force. The debate at Leipzig in 1519 had a clarifying effect on Luther's view of the real issue which he had created. He had arranged that debate with Eck at Augsburg, however, not for himself, but for his colleague Carlstadt. Eck had been watching Luther's conduct during the interviews with Cajetan, and saw the opportunity for gathering fame and emolument which the crushing of this inconvenient monk opened up to any one who would defeat him in an argument. By unscrupulous tactics he had brought it about that Luther was drawn into a debate which he had arranged for another, that Luther became the principal to this debate, and that by the addition of the notorious thirteenth thesis the subject of the debate was changed from that of man's free will in spiritual matters to that of the supremacy of the Pope. During the debate on this subject which Luther had not chosen, Luther noticed with painful surprise that Eck's entire argument was built on tradition and human authorities, with a disregard of the teaching of Scripture. "It is no small wonder to me," he remarked in his rejoinder to one of Eck's eloquent excursus into the realm of patristic teaching, "that the Doctor has undertaken to establish the divine right of the papacy, and that to this day he has not adduced one syllable from

Scripture in support of his claim, but only statements and certain actions of the *fathers*, and that, such as contradict each other." Even when Eck attempted a Scripture-proof, he offered it on the strength of the interpretation which some Church Father had given to the passage in question. "He has built up his argument on the words: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church,' which words, he says, have been interpreted by Augustine thus: 'Upon this rock, that is, upon Peter,' and this interpretation, he says, was never revoked. I answer: What is that to me? If he intends to argue against me, he will first have to harmonize his citation with the contrary statements of Augustine. For it is certain that Augustine has frequently interpreted 'rock' as referring to Christ, and in scarcely a single instance has he referred it to Peter. Accordingly, Augustine is speaking more on my side than against me. But even if Augustine and all the fathers had understood the rock to mean Peter, I should oppose him single-handed, on the authority of the apostle (that is, by a divine right), who writes 1 Cor. 3: 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ,' and on the authority of Peter in his First Epistle, chap. 2, where he calls Christ a 'living stone' and a 'corner-stone,' and teaches us to be 'built up a spiritual house.'" 6)

The numerous clashes in which he had to engage with leading Romanists after the Leipzig Debate made it ever clearer to Luther that Rome was determined not to bow to the authority of Scripture. When Rome, upon the instigation of Eck, closed the case against Luther by excommunicating him, unless he recanted within three times twenty days, Luther was convinced that he had come to the parting of the ways with the papacy, and proceeded to exhibit with crushing evidence Rome's false principle of authority in religion in his three great reformatory writings of 1520. In his *Appeal to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* he compares Rome to the walled city of Jericho. "May God now give us," he exclaims, "one of the trumpets by which the walls of Jericho were thrown down. . . . The second wall is . . . the claim that they alone are masters of the Bible. Although their whole life long they learn nothing in it, yet they presume to say that they alone understand it, and juggle with such words as that the Pope cannot err; be he bad or good, one cannot teach him a letter! It is for that reason that so many heretical and unchristian, yes, unnatural laws stand in the Canon Law. . . . The third wall falls of itself when the

6) Loescher, *Vollstaend. Ref.-Acta*, etc., III, 357 f.

first two are down; for when the Pope acts against Scripture, we are bound by Scripture to punish and compel him." 7)

In his *Babylonian Captivity of the Church* he demolished the entire sacramental theology of Rome by measuring it against the sole authority of the Scriptures and denouncing the favorite claim of Rome's dogmaticians, that the Bible itself derives its authority from the Church, because the Church has determined what is the Bible. With overwhelming force he showed that faith in the Scriptures springs from the Scriptures, not from some papal deliverance concerning the Scriptures, that the Bible is self-authenticating, and exerts its power on man by its inherent virtue. "The Word of God is in an incomparable manner superior to the Church, and the Church has no power over Scripture to set up, ordain, or do anything, but is a creature that must itself be set up, ordained, and created by Scripture. Who could give birth to his own father or mother? Was there ever any one who first produced his author? . . . It is a shameful, iniquitous servitude that a Christian man, who is free, is subjected to when he is made to submit to other than the divine and heavenly doctrines. . . . At this point Christian fraternity ceases: the shepherds have become wolves, the servants tyrants, the spirituals worldlings." 8)

In the Dedictory Epistle which Luther appended to his treatise *On the Liberty of a Christian Man* Luther addressed Pope Leo X as follows: "Do not listen to the sweet sirens who are saying to you that you are not a mere man, but that there is in you a mixture of God, who has authority to command and require anything. This is not going to be, you will not accomplish it. You are a servant of all the servants of God, and in a more precarious and miserable state than any other man on earth. Be not deceived by those who lie and fawn to you, saying that you are a lord over all the world, who will suffer no one to be a Christian except he is subject to you, and who prate to you that you have power over heaven, hell, and purgatory. They are your enemies, they seek to destroy your soul. As Isaiah says: 'My well-beloved, those who praise and exalt thee cause thee to err.' 9) All who say to you that you are above a council and above Christendom in general err. All who ascribe to you alone authority to interpret the Scriptures err," etc. 10)

7) X, 266 ff.

8) XIX, 4 ff.; especially cols. 108. 112. 113.

9) Is. 5, 1. 9. 16; freely, according to the Vulgate.

10) XV, 783—795.

By a miracle of divine Providence Luther was summoned to Worms against the strenuous efforts of the papal legates and the Romanist party at the Diet. Appealing to the accepted Canon Law and to age-long practise, the representatives of the Pope had argued for nine months to the Emperor, to individual members of the Diet, and to the whole Diet in plenary sessions, that by the two bulls of excommunication¹¹⁾ Luther's case had become *res adjudicata*, settled with absolute finality by the only authority on earth that had jurisdiction in such a case (*Roma locuta est!*), and that to summon Luther for a hearing before the Diet would not only mean to reopen his case, which the Diet had no right to do, but it would also mean a practical denial of the supremacy of the Pope and, ultimately, a subversion of every other authority, since all authority of men in any condition of life was derived from the plenitude of spiritual and secular power with which the Pope was vested by Christ. The Diet which listened to Luther was in Rome's estimate an abomination: rebels giving an audience to an apostate. But the principle which Luther had been advocating for the last three years and a half had leavened a goodly part of Germany. Papistic arguments failed to impress men who believed that Scripture is above the Pope; and when the citation of Luther could not be averted, Rome's principal *chargé d'affaires* at the court of Charles V set to work, after the summons had already reached Luther and had been accepted, to change the purport of the citation, and succeeded in arranging a program for Luther's hearing on April 17 by which a gag was put into Luther's mouth, and he was told that he had been summoned only to state whether he would recant. To the very last the principle of autocracy was applied to Luther. But once more a higher Power thwarted the tyrannical design of Rome, and it is to that interference that the world owes the great speech of the Reformer of April 18, which rang out in the glorious appeal to the Scriptures.

That day at Worms is the birthday of the Lutheran Church: from its incipency the Lutheran Church is cradled in the *sola Scriptura* principle. It came into existence as the standing antithesis to every false principle of authority in matters of faith and conscience. It started on its remarkable career as the great spiritual teacher of men who inculcated upon men the truth that in

11) *Exsurge Domine*, June 15, 1520, and *Decet Romanum Pontificem*, January 3, 1521.

the domain of man's spiritual interests the Word of God is the supreme and sole arbiter. That principle is the vital element in the faith of Lutherans, and with that principle — and the other which is embodied in it as its most precious content, *sola gratia* — the Lutheran Church stands or falls.

Confessionalism of the Missouri Synod.

PROF. W. H. T. DAU, St. Louis, Mo.

4. QUALITY AND CHARACTER.

A. Absolute or Relative Necessity of Symbols?

It is, indeed, true that the Symbolical Writings are not, as some have claimed, of absolute necessity; nor are they supplements to an insufficient norm. But their necessity, as has at all times been asserted and attested by the orthodox teachers of our Church, is of a hypothetical nature — a so-called necessity of expediency, produced by existing circumstances.

*Dr. Walther, in Preface to "Lehre und Wehre," 1877.*¹⁾

In the issue of March 21, 1862, a contributor to the *Lutheran Observer*, who signs himself "Spener," sets out to exhibit the sterility of symbolism. His exhibit is the German population of St. Louis, where the old symbolic system imported from Europe more than twenty years ago has been in operation, he says, without let or hindrance all this time, and in twenty years has succeeded in winning for its church out of sixty thousand Lutherans from Europe only five thousand. The writer declares this result a *testimonium paupertatis* for symbolism. He is gracious enough to say that he does not wish his remarks to be understood as a stricture upon his brethren of the old symbolical faction, especially not upon those of St. Louis, whom he regards, from all that he knows about them, as good, learned, and pious men. He merely wishes to point out to them "that their *system* is wrong," and it is this system which he and others oppose.²⁾

Our interest in this episode at present is merely this: to show that within the first quarter of a century of the existence of the Missouri Synod its confessional attitude had led to the coining of catch-words by which its fidelity to the Symbols of the Lutheran Church was to be designated — "symbolism" and "symbolists."

1) p. 4.

2) *Lehre u. Wehre*, 1862, p. 152.

The terms really were not of American mintage; they were imported from Germany. But they were vigorously applied by Lutherans who otherwise prided themselves on their sterling "Americanism" and were apt to treat everything foreign with a condescending pity — they were applied by these Lutherans to the Missourians because of their consistent confessionalism, which was felt by outsiders to be so thorough-going and pronounced that they declared it the Missouri Synod's "system."

The term "symbolism" was meant as an opprobrium: its intended signification was that the Missourians were overstating the necessity of the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. It is, therefore, both reassuring and instructive to the present generation of Missourians to know the exact position of the founders of the Missouri Synod on the question of the necessity of the Lutheran Confessions. The evidence before us shows that at no time has their zeal in behalf of the Confessions led the teachers of the Missouri Synod to the extreme of claiming for the Confessions an absolute necessity — a necessity that would imply that for the preservation of the Church and the salvation of souls the Holy Scriptures are insufficient. In their view the Lutheran Confessions, as well as confessions in general, are emergency measures, conditioned upon circumstances arising in the life of a churchly society. Their chief use was for purposes of defense: over against false teachers, who appealed to Scripture as they proposed to interpret it, the Church by means of a public confession declared what the true meaning of the Scriptures on a given doctrinal matter is, and has always been held to be by true believers. If there had never been any false teachers, there would have been no need of Confessions.

In the official literature of the Missouri Synod this point was made clear at a very early time.³⁾ In 1849 Walther published an article, inscribed, "Why Must We Cling Firmly, Even in Our Day, to the Confessional Writings of Our Evangelical Lutheran Church?" In this article he said: —

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world,'⁴⁾ that is the pathetic utterance of the Apostle John

3) *Der Lutheraner* had become the property of the Synod by gift of Prof. Walther at the session of the First Convention on Tuesday, April 27, 1847. Walther was asked to continue his editorship of the paper, and was given twelve assistants. See *Minutes*, p. 7 f.

4) 1 John 4, 1.

in his First Epistle, and at all times the Christian Church has had to reiterate this pathetic statement. As often as God had the wheat of His pure Word sown, He was promptly followed by the enemy, who sowed the tares of false doctrine at the same time. The deplorable consequence was that a multitude of factions arose within the Christian Church, which are distinguished and separated from one another by the different tenets which they hold and profess. Accordingly, the majority of these factions have laid down in writing certain confessions of faith, containing the teachings because of which they are separate from others and on the basis of which they have united all their members in a distinct ecclesiastical society. Now, the books containing such confessions of faith of entire factions in the Church have of old been denominated by the foreign term *symbols*, or *symbolical books*. This is a Greek word, and means as much as *standard*, or *watchword*. As soldiers by means of their standards and watchwords are able to distinguish friends and foes, even in disguise, so by means of his symbols, or public confessions of faith, a member of a party in the Church can easily distinguish those who are for or against his faith. . . .

“The doctrine contained in these [Symbolical] Books was first orally professed before the whole world by those who were first called Lutherans, and was then deposited in written form in these books for all time to come. On the basis of the doctrine contained in these books, and on no other, the first Lutherans became united, also externally, in ecclesiastical communions. On this basis, then, the Lutheran Church was founded, for from this doctrine it derives its origin, and by its means it is distinguished from all other parties and communions that exist within the Christian Church. Accordingly, any one who says: I want to be a *Lutheran*, pledges himself at the same time to the doctrines contained in the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church. And any one who declares that he wants to be a *Lutheran preacher* attests, not only that he regards the articles of faith contained in these books as true and right, but also that he is willing, by the grace and with the strength which God will grant him, to preach, defend, and spread these articles. On the other hand, whoever rejects the doctrine contained in the Symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church is not a real Lutheran, as little as a person rejecting anabaptism is an anabaptist, or one arguing against the teaching of Zwingli a Zwinglian, or one who rejects the Bible a Christian. For as Christians in

general are, by the *Bible*, distinguished from Mohammedans with their *Koran*, so a Lutheran Christian in particular is, by *his* Symbolical Books, distinguished from all other Christians with *their* symbols. . . .

"It is folly to oppose the Bible to the symbols. The Bible is, so to speak, God's pledge to us, while the symbols are our pledge to God. The Bible represents God's appeal to men: Do you believe My Word? The symbols are men's answer: Yes, Lord, we believe what Thou hast spoken. The Bible is the mine in which all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God are hidden; the symbols are the treasure-houses in which, as in a spiritual store-house and armory, the Church has deposited the treasures which in the course of centuries were, with much labor, dug from the Bible-mine and brought to light. The Bible with its teachings is God's manuscript concerning our salvation, which Satan ever strives to falsify and to declare spurious; the symbols contain the documents which the Church has appended to show that the doctrines of the Bible have at all times been believed and maintained. The Bible is the revealed Word of God itself; the symbols are the correct understanding of the Word, which God has given to His Church." ⁵⁾

This teaching Walther maintained consistently in his classes at the Seminary in St. Louis. Before his *Annotated Baier* — the compend of dogmatics used at the Seminary — was published in 1879, the students took down in writing the citations from the works of the leading Lutheran dogmaticians, by means of which Walther sought to expand the expositions of Baier's *Compendium*. The selection of these citations shows Walther's dogmatical aim. In his *Prolegomena* Baier asserts canonical, or normative, authority for the Scriptures alone, and says: "Hence, when our Symbolical Books are sometimes called a norm or normative books, the term 'norm' is not taken in the absolute, but in a contingent sense (*secundum quid*), or the statement is added that they are a secondary, or normated, norm, that is, a norm less properly so called." ⁶⁾ To this statement Walther added the following statements from Carpzov's and Walch's *Introductions to the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church*.

Carpzov: "The Symbolical Books were not written in the same manner in which the Biblical writers prepared their canonical

5) *Der Lutheraner*, January 22, 1849, pp. 81. 82.

6) *Compend. Theol. Pos.* Vol. I, p. 139.

writings, by an impulse divinely inspired, nor are they of absolute necessity, and needed because of the insufficiency of the canon of Scripture, as Bellarminus (l. 4. *De Verbo Dei*, c. 4) criticizes the books of the Bible for omitting a catechesis.⁷⁾ But they were written for another reason, namely, from a necessity which in the schools is called a necessity of expediency, that is to say, for the purpose of confining the debates of ingenious men within proper bounds, of heading off offenses to those of a weak faith, and of making the trickiness and malice of heretics manifest. . . . Any document composed from Scripture, according to Scripture, and after Scripture (*ex Scriptura et ad ac secundum eam*) is not a *principium*, but a *principiatum*.”⁸⁾ We must admit, indeed, that even our Symbolical Books⁹⁾ come under the designation of a norm, and that this name is given to the Symbolical Books of our Church. However, the terms *principium* and *norma* are not simply and properly used as synonyms by the authors of the Preface. *By agreement something can be referred for direction and judgment to a ‘principiatum,’ and the latter may for that reason deserve to be called a norm.* And thus the word ‘norm’ is taken in the Preface to the Book of Concord, and by writers in the primitive Church, for example, when the Ecumenical Creeds, and especially the Apostolic, . . . are by the fathers called *kanon tes aletheias aklines*, ‘the unbending rule of truth’ (Irenaeus, l. 1, c. 1, § 19), ‘the immovable rule of faith’ (Tertullian), ‘the norm for preaching that has been set up uniformly throughout all nations’ (Rufinus and Venantius Fortunatus), ‘the sure rule of faith by which believers maintain catholic unity and convict heretical badness’ (Augustine, *Serm. de Temp. Hom.* 181). And thus in the place before us now the term ‘norm’ signifies nothing else than a principle for knowing something, by which we are guided to the knowledge of any conclusion or question regarding which there is a difference of opinion. A principle of this kind is even that which is dependent upon something else and established from another source, as Aristotle shows (l. prior. analyt., c. 2. 8). Hence the symbol is not a norm in the absolute and categorical sense, but in reference to certain churches that presuppose the truth and reliability of the symbol to have been established from Scripture.

7) A brief exposition of doctrine.

8) Not a determining principle, but something that is itself determined, or regulated, by something else.

9) Preface to *Book of Concord*, St. Louis Triglot Ed., p. 22 f.

However, while it cannot be denied that by means of this terminology there has been ascribed to the Symbolical Books the character of *a norm not only for distinguishing, but also for defining objects*, still those who have thus used the term have done so with the consciousness of a very great difference that exists in this matter . . . and have regarded the Symbolical Books only as secondary norms, after the manner of postulates which need to be proved true themselves, but, having been proved from another source, are admitted in the schools as certain and unquestioned."

Again: "The authors of the Book of Concord do not deny that Scripture alone is the only norm to which all dogmas must be referred back and in accordance with which they must be judged; . . . still they do not deny that in a manner and in a certain sense even these [symbolical] writings are a norm. . . . *They ascribe more to them than the mere quality of testimonies.* . . . However, when a symbolical book is called a *norm* and model of doctrine according to which, etc., this is understood only in a contingent sense, because of a certain external analogy, which consists in this, that also by this norm a judgment and estimate of something may be formed, although this norm is not the principle underlying the object that is being judged and estimated. This happens when the question is not regarding the truth of a doctrine, but regarding its reception, flourishing condition, and approbation in a certain church, for instance, whether the Flacian dogma of original sin has ever been received and approved by the Lutheran Church; whether the teaching of Flacius is in harmony with the teaching that has been handed down since the beginning of the Reformation and received in the Lutheran Church. Thus, then, a symbolical book is called a norm, not of faith itself, but of the profession of faith, and that, not of the entire faith, but only of certain controverted heads of doctrine as these, moreover, are being perpetuated in certain churches. . . . Our theologians have not put a symbolical book on a level with the absolute norm, but have ascribed to their symbolical book what comports with the nature and character of such a book, and have set up no extreme claims for it. For they wanted their symbolical book to be 1) a testimony showing how the doctrine of faith was apprehended and was being publicly taught as drawn from the Word of God; 2) a safeguard against license in phraseology that was to keep within fixed bounds especially the teachers when speaking of and preaching doctrine in our churches; 3) *a standard by which the writings of others*

could be tested, not as to their truth or falsity, for that must be established from Scripture alone, but as to their agreement with the doctrine that was received by the Lutheran Church from the beginning and handed down to posterity; 4) a means for keeping the simple members of the Church from spurious writings of others by which the purity of the doctrine once received was disturbed; 5) a receptacle in which the sacred deposit of the pure teaching of Luther might be transmitted to remote posterity."

G. Walch: "The *primary* norm is that which of itself and by its own quality has normative power; a *secondary* norm, however, is one which is endowed with normative power, not of itself, but by the authority of Holy Scripture and because of its agreement with the same. The secondary norm, therefore, is dependent upon the primary. . . . Others, who do not like these distinctions formulated by our theologians, distinguish between a *norma decisionis* and a *norma discretionis*. The former is to be that self-authenticating and plainly infallible principle in whose decision both sides to a controversy must acquiesce; the latter, however, does not definitely settle a controverted question, but divides the orthodox from the heterodox, and shows who are siding with the pure doctrine. . . . Wernsdorf holds that the symbols could be called *norma cognitionis*, in the sense that they are a kind of principle by the aid of which we can attain to the knowledge of certain truths. It seems, however, that this function should be accorded to the norm of Scripture. . . . On reflection, any one will easily understand that the symbols should be called *norma cognitionis* when the knowledge in question does not refer to truth itself and its foundation, but to the profession of truth. The symbols are *norma cognitionis* inasmuch as we can see from them which teachings are peculiar to a certain church. Accordingly, when the question is whether this or that doctrine is *Lutheran*, this point must be ascertained from the symbols, and for this ascertainment the symbols are the norm. But if the question is whether this or that doctrine is true or false, this point, surely, must not be ascertained by taking the symbols as the norm, but from Holy Scripture."

Walther's grounds and method of appraising the value of the Lutheran Symbols were eloquently stated in connection with the anniversary of the Formula of Concord in 1877, when he wrote: "The symbols of an orthodox Church are, as the Formula of Concord states, 'a comprehensive, unanimously approved summary and form wherein is brought together from God's Word the common

doctrine, reduced to a brief compass, which the churches that are of the true Christian religion confess, . . . moreover, . . . this comprehensive form of doctrine should not be based on private writings, but on such books as have been composed, approved, and received in the name of the churches which pledge themselves to one doctrine and religion.' ¹⁰⁾ Individual teachers of the Church who were specially gifted and enlightened have given masterful explanations of doctrines and convincing proofs for the same from God's Word. Moreover, they have with great ingenuity unmasked, and thoroughly refuted, soul-destroying errors that were making a great show in the Church. These labors of theirs they deposited in their private writings and bequeathed them to posterity. Now, if even these writings are imperishable treasures that cannot be balanced by all the gold in the world, how much more declarations which an entire orthodox Church has publicly delivered in behalf of the truth and in opposition to error! These declarations deposited in written form as a testimony for all time to come are so great a treasure that words fail to describe it. Woe to a church which has inherited from a former orthodox Church a pure confession of doctrine, which represents the trophy of severe conflicts, sterling gold of truth tried seven times in the furnace of fierce afflictions, and casts such a heritage aside as antiquated rubbish, as worthless refuse, as unripe grapes, or leaves it lie in the dust unused! It is, indeed, true that the symbolical writings are not, as some have claimed, of absolute necessity, nor are they supplements of an insufficient norm. But their necessity, as has at all times been asserted and attested by the orthodox teachers of our Church, is of a hypothetical nature, — a so-called necessity of expediency, produced by existing circumstances. (Cf. *Carpzovii Isag.*, p. 5.) Nevertheless the Confessions of the orthodox Church, next to the written Word of God, are the most valuable written documents which the grace of God has bequeathed to the Church in later ages. They deserve, indeed, that after the expiration of another century since this treasure was bequeathed by the Lord, a jubilee be instituted by the Church, and fervent and humble thanks be rendered, jointly and publicly, to the Lord for the gift and gracious preservation of these treasures." ¹¹⁾

Interesting, too, is Walther's method of explaining these truths,

10) *Concordia Triglotta*, p. 849 f.

11) *Lehre u. Wehre*, 1877 (preface), p. 4.

which he had expounded with an array of learning to the theologians, at a synodical convention before laymen. He was leading the doctrinal discussion at the first convention of the Iowa District in 1879, and spoke on "The Principal Duties of a Synod That is Entitled to the Name Evangelical Lutheran." He said:—

"Perhaps some one might be surprised that we have not named fidelity to God's Word as our first main duty. Let us reflect a moment: by pledging loyalty to the Word of God a synod attests its purpose to be a *Christian* synod. However, if the object is to attest the fact that a synod is *Lutheran*, it must make the Confession of the Lutheran Church *its own* confession. To be sure, by doing this the synod at the same time pledges, in full earnest, loyalty to God's Word. For our Confessions demand before all else a pledge of loyalty to the Word of God.

"Even in apostolic times it was deemed necessary to set up a confession. We have the Apostles' Creed in our Catechism. It seems that originally this Creed was propagated by oral tradition. Every Christian knew it, and it was not written down until a later period. But it is a testimony for all times that the wisdom of the apostles deemed a symbol necessary for the Church. Such was the case especially when false brethren had crept into the Church, as happened in the congregations in Galatia, and when such men as Simon the sorcerer obtained admission to the society of the believers. These people fully pledged themselves to the Christian doctrine, to the entire Old Testament, and to the written documents of apostolic origin then in existence. But they misinterpreted them. Accordingly, when a person in those days wished to be received into the Christian Church, he was not merely asked: Do you regard the Christian doctrine as correct? Do you believe all of it? For while making such a profession a person might still be a rogue at heart and connect a different meaning with the Christian doctrine. Accordingly, he was asked: Do you believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? He was not received until he had accepted the entire Creed as his own. This Creed proved sufficient during the first three centuries, until heretics arose, *e. g.*, Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches, Pelagius, who seemingly professed in full earnest that they accepted all apostolic writings in their proper and genuine sense, but who understood everything in a sense different from that of the Christian Church. Against these men the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds were formulated.

Not until a later age, when Antichrist had occupied his seat in the Christian Church, did these efforts to oppose symbols to rising heresies gradually cease. For the Pope, the Antichrist, with his creatures, claimed to be the living symbol. What is the need of symbols? he said. You have only to ask me, and I shall decide what is truth. Now, the precious doctrines contained in the Apostles' Creed, and, in general, in the Ecumenical Creeds, have indeed been preserved even in the midst of popery; but that proves the paramount importance of these symbols. Antichrist had deprived the poor Christians of the Bible, but he could not take from them the symbols, especially the Apostles' Creed; for they knew that by heart. He did not dare to declare against this Creed, for he was afraid of exposing himself. Not until we enter the life everlasting shall we see of what importance it has been that the three Ecumenical Creeds subsisted while Antichrist ruled in the Church. No matter how many horrible errors he launched, he could not unsettle the truths expressed in those Creeds in the hearts of all those who were at all concerned about the truth and about salvation. At last God ushered in the Reformation; however, the truth proclaimed by Luther had hardly found its way among the Christian people, when God furnished an occasion which forced the Lutherans to confess their faith. They did this faithfully at the Diet of Augsburg in the year 1530. The Augsburg Confession was not by any means a writing composed by some private gentleman at his study for the purpose of setting up a norm of faith for Lutherans, but it was nothing else than a protocol of those matters which all Lutherans at that time believed without exception. In the true sense of the word it was the confession of Lutherans. The Papists undertook to refute it, but they refused to publish their refutation, because they strongly felt that they had not refuted the Lutheran Confession. This papistic Confutation furnished the occasion for publishing in the name of the Lutheran Church the Apology, that is, the Defense of the Augsburg Confession. Owing to the continuous urging of the Lutherans that a free Christian council should be summoned, in order that the entire Christian Church might render a judgment on the errors of the papacy, Luther was asked at a later time to formulate a confession which might be presented at a council in the name of the Lutherans. The Pope did summon a council to meet at Mantua, but his action was mere sham. He knew that he was lost, if the plan to hold a council of that kind carried. For the

separation which we behold now had not yet occurred at that time. After Luther's death critical controversies broke out even in the Lutheran Church. Everybody tried to be a Luther. For this reason the theologians of our Church who had remained faithful composed the Formula of Concord in 1577. This is the final general confession of our Church. However, since simple laymen cannot be expected to study the entire collection of our Confessions, it was decided to make the Small and the Large Catechism of Luther a confession of our Church, because these writings were known to all Lutheran people, and were regarded as books of sterling quality by them."

"Hence it is not because of the insufficiency of Scripture that the Confessions are necessary, but rather because many cite and appeal to the Holy Scriptures in a wrong sense; this compelled the orthodox to say to any one that wanted to side with them: You say, indeed, that you believe what is written in the Bible. However, many say the same, and still do not believe, but horribly pervert Scripture. Do you believe this and this, viz., the teachings contained in our Confessions?"¹²⁾

This teaching on the relative necessity of the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church is echoed on every appropriate occasion by speakers in the Missouri Synod. We submit a few pertinent instances.

"This, then, is settled: God has shown us the right way in His Word, and we dare not put anything in the place of the Word. The Word is the rule and norm of faith for the individual Christian, as well as for Christian congregations and federations of the same. However, we meet with the difficulty that a host of men appeal to the Word, but interpret it in a manner entirely different from ours. They want to prove all their false doctrines from the Word. Hence it is absolutely necessary that Christians show what they regard as a correct interpretation of the Word. That is the reason why a public confession was presented, and this Confession was elucidated and confirmed from the Word of God. Accordingly, any one desiring to be a true Lutheran will say: We do not only in a general way pledge adherence to the Word of God, but also to the Confessions; for in these it is declared how we understand and interpret the Word. This means, not that we pledge adherence first to the Word and next to the Confessions, but that because

12) *Iowa Distr. Report*, Mo. Syn., 1879, pp. 11—13.

of our being pledged to the Word we pledge ourselves also to the Confessions, since they are nothing else than the correct interpretation of the Word.”¹³⁾

“The ancient religion whose doctrine was brought to light again and restored to its pristine purity is offensive to many; for this reason they oppose the old Confessional Writings which are the banner beneath which true Lutherans fight for the truth. They pretend that by means of the Symbolical Writings dividing walls are erected between men. Their cry is: Down with these barriers which block the way to Christian love! We Missourians are blamed for nothing so much as for our faithful adherence to the Symbolical Writings; for this reason we are called idolaters who are paying homage to a paper pope. Even such as wish to pass for Lutherans faithful to the Confessions have not hesitated to call the Missourians Talmudists, comparing us to the hardened Jews who are superstitiously devoted to the diabolical tenets of the Talmud. Why are these Confessional Writings needed? Why is the Bible not sufficient?—these questions we have been and are being asked quite seriously. There is no doubt that in the true Church Christ alone is the Master, and His Word alone must prevail. Nor do we place the Confessional Writings alongside of the Bible, much less above the Bible; nor do we claim that they are a law imposed on Lutherans. Nevertheless, the Symbolical Writings are a confession by which the true Church that lives its faith solemnly pledges allegiance to the doctrine of the pure Word and testifies that it intends to adhere to the pure Word of God.”¹⁴⁾

“The orthodox Church has had confessional writings from the beginning, not as though it had to have a norm of faith besides the Scriptures, or as equivalent or superior to the Scriptures, but its Confessional Writings and Confessions were meant only as the affirmation of Holy Scripture on the part of the orthodox Church over against the negation of errorists.”¹⁵⁾

13) Rev. Buehler at San Francisco, Cal., September 22—27, 1887; *Report of California-Oregon Distr.*, 1887, p. 29 f.

14) Rev. Chr. Hochstetter at Fisherville, Ont., September 13—17, 1894; *Canada Distr. Report*, 1894, p. 66 f.

15) *Western Distr. Report*, Mo. Syn., 1906, p. 84.

THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

† Prof. R. D. Biedermann. †

The President of Concordia Theological Seminary at Springfield, Ill., died after a brief illness March 8, and his body was laid to rest at Indianapolis March 13. A funeral service was conducted at the seminary chapel March 10. The Missouri Synod has lost an able officer in Prof. Biedermann.
D.

As Others See Us.

Reviewing Prof. Bente's *American Lutheranism*, the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* (Southern Baptist), in its issue for January, pleads for similar volumes on the history of American Christianity that are to take the place of the American Church History Series of a generation ago. The reviewer (William W. Barnes) regards the two volumes of Prof. Bente's work which have been published so far as "well written and readable and a valuable contribution to the literature of American Christianity." He says, in particular:—

"To a non-Lutheran the introduction in volume I is the most interesting part of the two volumes. The author is certainly a Lutheran, and believes what he professes. In these days of tendency to laxness in belief it is refreshing to come upon one who believes something and knows what he believes. 'The Lutheran Church is the true visible Church of God on earth.' (p. 5.) Other bodies, 'sectarian Churches,' must be invisible churches since the author does not deny them some sort of churchly standing. 'The Lutheran Church is not the universal or only Christian Church.... Nor is it the only saving Church, because there are other Churches preaching Christian truths, which by the grace of God, prove sufficient and powerful to save men.' (pp. 4. 5.) The author does not inform us which of the Lutheran bodies is this 'visible' Church. It seems that some of these bodies hold aloof from one another. The organ of the Augustana Synod, warning against the recent Merger of the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod in the South into the United Lutheran Church, says: 'We must hold ourselves aloof from spiritual fellowship with such churches or denominations, some of whose factors advocate' certain things. (II, p. 3.) The organ of the General Council which went into the Merger says that the attitude of the Augustana Synod toward the Merger 'is as un-American as it is un-Lutheran.' (II, p. 4.) The organ of the Ohio Synod, which also declined to go into the Merger, says: 'Would that Luther could return and with the thunder of his scorn shatter this celebration of his work! Where unionism has its jubilee, all true Lutherans turn away in sorrow and anger.' (II, 4. 5.) One wonders

which one of these seemingly antagonistic bodies is 'the true visible Church of God on earth.'"

The answer to the reviewer's wondering query is in the book he has reviewed. D.

Periergazein.

One form of this evil which the apostle has scored in 2 Thess. 3, 11 and 1 Tim. 5, 13, is exhibited by the *American Lutheran* (March) thus:—

"There is a tendency to judge a congregation's life and efficiency by the number of societies, guilds, sororities, and brotherhoods in its midst. The minister who has been the responsible head or at least the mentor of such a flock of organizations is inclined to be somewhat dubious. He is ready enough to admit the advantages which give these societies excuse for existence. He will not deny that they have certain phases of usefulness. But when he has leisure to weigh the relative value of the time devoted by himself to mere organizational detail and sociability and taken from the multiplicity of his ministerial duties with which he never appears able to catch up, he is apt to become a little depressed. He dare not raise his voice in protest. It is impressed upon him from various sides that modern church-life demands these things, and that the Church must do these things in order to escape fossilization. For this or that purpose, or for no purpose at all, this or that group in the church organizes a new society, the church council sanctions the move, and calmly hands the new burden over to the minister. The church officials take no further interest, unless some irregularity occurs, when they turn to the minister and ask him to give an accounting.... A modern city pastorate is becoming an insane chase, a carefully scheduled routine of meetings. Many of them are necessary. Some of them are not. In regard to any additional budding organization a church ought seriously to consider whether it will add specifically to the efficiency of the congregation. If it will not, then it will injure it in loss of energy, time, and thought that might be utilized otherwise. And it is the already overburdened pastor's energy, time, and thought that will be dissipated. It is like a manufacturing plant installing one new machine after the other and expecting the same old engineer to run them all. It is remarkable how he does keep them all going with so few breakdowns. Here and there one will slow down and perhaps cease functioning altogether, but as a rule the wheels are kept turning, though with what consumption of the engineer's energy and vitality nobody knows but the engineer himself and—the engineer's wife.

"There is a growing activity of laymen in the affairs of the Church, but very few seem inclined to relieve the pastor of the management of the various church societies. It does require special talents, but no doubt the talents are there or can be developed. At any rate modern congregations must make some provision to avoid the flagrant dissipation of pastoral energy. They must bear in mind that conservation of energy is essential to true efficiency." D.

Publicity at Plymouth.

When one remembers the slur on Lutheranism in one of the documents exhibited in Pilgrim Hall at Plymouth, Mass., one reads with extra satisfaction of the work of our congregation at that place to acquaint the little town with the doctrinal position, the aim, and the work of the Lutheran Church, which was accomplished by a week of intensive publicity work. Rev. Prokopy describes this work in the *American Lutheran* (March), and prefaces his account with the following remarks which admit of application outside of Plymouth: —

"We have always believed in dignified, intensive, and extensive church publicity, and have made use of tracts, newspapers, and other means of publicity right along. We have always felt that the Church which teaches and believes that by the grace of God it is the true visible Church has sadly neglected its duty and opportunity. Happily, though sadly, it was awakened to its duty and opportunity by the recent World War. We have thanked God for the difficulties the war has imposed on us, for it makes us work so much the harder to let the people know what we stand for, and the fruits of our efforts are bound to come some time.

"The war hysteria brought many false conceptions and ugly sentiments to the surface, and this heightened our anxiety to devote some specific time to make consistent and well-planned efforts toward making our Church, its doctrine and practise, better known. Not only for the sake of non-Lutherans, however, did we feel that 'Lutheran Publicity Week' was a needed thing, but for the sake of our own Lutheran people. They need information about their Church, its doctrine, practise, history. They need an awakening to Lutheran consciousness."

D.

"Whose Is the Child?" — How Holland Settled the Question.

When the body of Abraham Kuyper was laid to rest in the soil of the Low Countries on November 12, 1920, the last chapter had been written in the career of one of the most remarkable men of our age. "Theologian, statesman, orator, university-founder, preacher, journalist, author, church-reformer, leader, organizer, traveler, all this and more, and preeminent in every capacity, and above all a humble and devout Christian" — is the characterization of this truly great man in an article contributed to the *Princeton Theological Review* for January, 1921.

Kuyper's life was one of grilling conflicts in behalf of a revival and invigoration of Protestantism in the Netherlands. A consistent Calvinist, he did not shrink from entering the political arena and organizing a Christian political party in order to put through his program of spiritual reform. When he passed away, says the contributor to the *Review*, "the country was covered with Christian primary schools, having splendid buildings and up-to-date equipment, . . . schools in their entire instruction guided by the principles of the Word of God; not merely schools where a portion of the Bible is read and teaching is started with prayer, but schools where the entire instruc-

tion is permeated with the principles of the Calvinistic world- and life-view." The principles on which Kuyper waged his battles for a (state-supported) system of Christian schools are thus set forth:—

"The Liberal party was endeavoring, by suppressing the private schools and forcing the parents to send their children to the godless public schools, to rob the Christian people of their right to give their children a Christian education. This attack on the freedom of conscience was thwarted by Kuyper and the faithful men who supported him. It was the beginning of a long struggle, in which the slogan was, 'A free school and a free church in a free nation'; and the aim was to secure the recognition of the right of parents to decide for themselves along which religious line their children should be educated; and the main contention was that it was nothing short of heathenism to insist that children should be regarded as belonging to the state, and should be educated by the state in the state schools according to principles decided upon by the state. Kuyper maintained that, since the children belong to the parents, and their education is the primary concern of the parents, therefore the school belongs to the parents. This was his strong and logical reasoning, his never-resting '75 mm.' gun in this warfare. State and Church, he admitted, may exercise supervision, to see whether the school comes up to the proper standard, and whether sound religion is taught; but the school is a free institution, the organ of a free society, or of parents united together in such a society. It was in this fight that Kuyper won one of his greatest successes; and at the same time the fight for the free school served as a rallying-point about which he could gather his people when divisions along other lines threatened trouble.

"And what a splendid success he had in this sphere! In the very month in which he died, the country celebrated the complete victory of the free and Christian school. After many a weary conflict and innumerable discussions it has at last gained equal rights with the public school in every respect; even the same financial support from government or municipality. Now even poor parents can without great financial sacrifice send their children to a Christian school and give them the Christian education they desire, an education in harmony with the Word of God, no longer being obliged, as they were before, to send their offspring to schools where the name of Jesus is rigorously excluded."

The notion of a state-supported Christian primary school will never find favor in America, and Lutherans would be least willing to give it countenance. But the basic principle on which Kuyper pivoted his efforts in behalf of primary school education is justified both by reason and Scripture, and is in harmony with every democratic sentiment.

GRAEBNER.

The Children's Sermon.

The paramount issue of a more thorough education of children in religion has led many pastors to make the children's sermon a regular feature of the church preaching-service. On this important

subject the *Biblical Review* (January, 1921) remarks: "Rightly handled, this should be a very real contribution to the Church's care for the spiritual welfare of the child. If it is merely a sort of entertainment feature, thrown in by way of bribing those children who lack parental supervision to remain at least a part of the service, it will not amount to a great deal. But if it be made a simple and attractive, yet serious and dignified presentation of Christian truth, with some passage of Scripture as a text, it may become indispensable. It is not necessary that the preacher play the clown or juggler to keep the attention of the little folks, whose hearts and minds are far more ready to absorb fundamental lessons than their elders often realize. Anecdote and illustration there must be, but the tactful preacher knows how, in such addresses, to maintain an atmosphere suggestive of both reverence and earnestness, instilling in his juvenile audience from Sabbath to Sabbath a sense of the hallowed nature of the place and the occasion. But there may come also an unexpected result, thus referred to by the *Expository Times* in commenting upon a book of texts for children: 'Virginibus Puerisque' has been a feature of the *Expository Times* for some years. No part of the magazine, unless perhaps the Introductory Notes, has been more appreciated. But the demand has been always greater than the supply. For the children's sermon is now almost everywhere a part of the regular service; and it is often the most interesting part. In the Highland parish already referred to there is a succession of great preachers throughout the summer months, and the people have got into the way of comparing one preacher with another; this year we were struck with the fact that it was the children's sermons that were compared and that were most *vividly remembered* (italics our own)." To this may be added the following facts: 1) Children attending parochial schools are usually found to be very willing to attend public worship. 2) Children attending parochial schools are usually found capable of following and understanding the regular sermon preached to the congregation. 3) The tendency of Sunday-school children to leave for home, immediately after the close of Sunday-school, without attending public worship, is due to a defective system of religious education, which because of its superficiality does not inculcate in the heart of the child a proper appreciation of the Word of God.

MUELLER.

"Spiritual Reconstruction."

Thus an Eastern weekly terms the following action of the British poet laureate, Robert Bridges. "In November, 1918, Dr. Bridges published a sonnet in the *Times* in which, to use his own analysis, he asserted 1) that ill-treatment of prisoners was a part of the Prussian war policy; 2) that no one in Germany protested against it; 3) that the Germans hoped the English would be provoked into similar barbarities. 'It is plain,' Dr. Bridges now comments (in the *London Chapbook* for January), 'that the second and third charges fall unless the first be true. And it was not true. Yet I believed it, having

been misled, as most of us were, by the newspapers. And that being so, I am not ashamed of retracting my words and expressing sorrow for having written them. And I can see that as I was misled by the English press, so the Germans probably were by their own, and that they have the same excuse for some of their ill-feeling as I have for mine.' " (*The Nation*, March 2.) "*It was not true, yet I believed it*" — what an overwhelming sadness is expressed by these simple words! And how many millions of men echo this pathetic confession to-day! Our informant adds: "Thus the fierce and bloody legends crumble in every land. But we must be on our guard against those whose business and profit lie in rebuilding them." D.

BOOK REVIEW.

Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.: —

1. **At the Tribunal of Caesar.** Leaves from the Story of Luther's Life. Prof. W. H. T. Dau. 286 pages. \$2.00.

April 18, 1521 — the day on which Luther before the Diet of Worms declared that he would be guided in matters of faith only by the Word of God — was *the* great day in the history of the Reformation. April 18, 1921, will mark the four-hundredth anniversary of Luther at Worms. We have reason to believe that Lutheran pastors everywhere will — either in April or in the course of this year, perhaps on the Festival of the Reformation in the fall — take notice of the great event and point out its much-needed lesson. If these will study Prof. Dau's latest book, *At the Tribunal of Caesar*, we know that they will thank him for having written it for them. Much historical material in its details has, with painstaking labor, been dug up from the sources, yet the presentation is such that the average reader can enjoy it.

Prof. Dau's book is the result of "a historic investigation embracing the study of motives and causes." For this reason especially it is a contribution of high merit to historical theology.

"The Worms episode," says the author, "is such an unusual occurrence at the time of its happening that it requires for its proper elucidation constant *looking behind the scenes*, where a powerful struggle is going on between the power that wants to prevent, and another power that wants to speed, Luther's coming to Worms. Accordingly, an unusually large proportion of the present narrative has been devoted to a description of the activity of the papal nuntii at Worms, especially Aleander, and of the statesmen and diplomats at the Emperor's court. However, none of this material has been taken up into the present volume for its own sake, but only because of the bearing it has on the hopes and fears that animated Luther in these months of the crisis of his life, on the decisions that were formed by him, and the classical simplicity with which he carried out his decisions."

The real issue at Worms was sensed by Aleander, the papal nuncio, who said, "The whole controversy is about the authority of the Pope."

And Luther's position was well defined by the Elector Frederick in his letter to the Emperor, saying: "Luther has always offered, on sufficient guarantee, to come forward and be examined by fair, honorable, and unsuspected judges, and, *if he is overcome by the Holy Scriptures*, to humbly stand corrected."

The "look behind the scenes" which Prof. Dau gives us in his book makes interesting reading. It makes us acquainted not only with motives and causes, such as the depths of corruption in Aleander's heart, which are usually not brought to the surface, but it also presents to us a mass of valuable detail, which helps us better to understand the persons who attended the Diet, and the conditions of that particular time.

The author takes us to the "back-room of the stage at Worms," and shows us that "the idea of summoning Luther to Worms was at its root a diplomatic move, decided upon in the most intimate circles of the political advisers of Charles V, but that these gentlemen had miscalculated the power and cunning of Aleander."

A graphic, but disgusting account is given us of the "Life at Worms during the Diet." Congestion, high cost of living, profiteering, and a gay life were the order of the day. Butzbach is quoted:—

"It is not safe here to be out of doors at night; hardly a night passes, but three or four persons are murdered. The Emperor keeps an attendant who has drowned, hanged, and murdered more than a hundred persons. Murdering, thieving, and prostitution are as ordinary events here as at Rome. Plenty of public women are found in every street. No Lent is observed here; tournaments are held; people gorge themselves with mutton, chicken, pigeons, eggs, milk, cheese, and life here is on the order of that in Dame Venus's Mountain. . . . Let me tell you also that many lords and foreigners are dying here; they all kill themselves drinking strong wines."

Not satisfied with one source, and not leaving the impression that a sensitive man had overstated the actual facts, Prof. Dau says: "These sketches are fully corroborated by the accounts of others. Lazarus Spengler, the city clerk of Nuremberg, was shocked by the general profligacy and the wild excesses which he witnessed during the Diet. Instead of attending to the affairs of state, he says, the lords spend their time banqueting and gambling, and the leading prelates of the Church are the worst *debauchees*. One of them lost 34,000 gulden in one week, a certain nobleman even 60,000. At a drinking bout seventy-two lords consumed 1,200 measures ('Mass') of wine. Every troop of travelers that arrived at Worms reported highway robberies."

The book tells us of the pretty cabriolet which conveyed Luther to Worms, the owner of which was a goldsmith and a partner in Lucas Cranach's printing-shop; of the *socius itinerarius* who made for the woods when Luther was waylaid at the ambush near Altenstein; of the gala day when Erfurt acted as host to the monk whom the Pope had cursed; and of Luther's illness, which spoiled Jonas's glorification schemes for the further trip to Worms. We are given extracts from a sermon by Luther at Erfurt, notes having been taken by Superintendent Gniser while Luther

spoke. One of the prayers spoken by Luther during the Diet is also recorded.

Of course, the central figure in the book is Luther; and the climax is his reply which had "neither horns nor teeth," but by which Luther took his firm stand on *Sola Scriptura*.

An appendix adds five chapters: 1) Origin and Character of the German Diet; 2) Wurmb's; 3) Glapion's Exceptions to Luther's Babylonian Captivity, with Brueck's Comment; 4) Litany delivered in a certain famous city in Germany on Ash Wednesday, February 13, 1521; 5) the renowned "Passionary of Christ and Antichrist," a collection of 26 cartoons setting forth to the eye the moral contrasts between genuine and counterfeit Christianity. 527 footnotes greatly enrich the historical value of the book.

A book upon which such a large amount of labor has been bestowed, which has been gotten out with such painstaking historical accuracy, and which speaks to us of an event by means of which God has given us the blessings which we to-day enjoy in State and Church, — and all this is true of Prof. Dau's *At the Tribunal of Caesar*, — ought not remain unbought and unread. Copies ought also to be placed in our public libraries.

We join the author in his prayer that "the Lord whom Luther confessed may deign to use this attempt to depict one of His loyal servants for inducing the men of our time to render Him similar service."

FRTZ.

2. The Pastor's Companion. A Pocket Agenda for the Most Frequent Ministerial Acts. English and German. 186 pages; gilt, flexible covers. \$2.00.

Pastors Christopher Merkel and H. L. Sprengeler have placed their brethren in the ministry under a distinct obligation by preparing the manuscript for this most thoughtful publication, and the Concordia Publishing House has very ably seconded their effort. As regards contents, the little handy volume is a most serviceable book, with its good Lutheran formularies for Baptism, Marriage, the Visitation and Communion of the Sick, and Burial, and with its double appendix of Bible Lessons and Funeral Hymns, and its insertion of blank leaves for pastoral notes at the end of both the English and the German section. It is a true "Pastor's Companion." As regards make-up, it is an elegant product of the Concordia press and bindery.

3. Verhandlungen der 27. Versammlung der Ev.-Luth. Synodalkonferenz. 52 pages. 25 cts.

Though small in size, this report of the convention of the Synodical Conference at Milwaukee last summer is a most important document, because it presents, besides Prof. Meyer's paper on "Our Struggle in Behalf of Our Parochial Schools," the final report of the Committee on the relation of the Synodical Conference to the old Norwegian Synod, and the account of the reception into membership of "The Norwegian Synod of the American Ev. Lutheran Church." An extensive report on the progress of the blessed work which the Synodical Conference is doing among the Colored people in the South fills nearly half this publication.

Catechisations. Based on a Short Exposition of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism, edited by the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. *D. Meibohm.* Part Second. 271 pages. \$1.60, net, plus postage. Order from the author, 2833 Bell St., New Orleans, La., or from Concordia Publishing House.

The work of our veteran schoolmaster and catechist Meibohm, the first part of which we had the pleasure of announcing eighteen months ago (*Theol. Quarterly* XXIII, p. 256), has been brought to its conclusion with the present volume. These actual lessons in catechetical form represent the ripe fruit of the life of an experienced teacher, and will continue his work, we trust, long after him.

Rev. Rudolph S. Ressmeyer, 44 Ridge St., Orange, N. J., announces a novel and meritorious undertaking, a **Guide for Bible Reading**, which offers on six pages suggestions for cursory daily Bible-reading with brief practical pastoral remarks. The issue before us gives 28 selections for every day in February (Luke 10, 1—19. 27).

The American Lutheran Publicity Bureau (22—26 E. 17th St., New York City) announces an artistic anniversary stamp representing Luther at the Diet of Worms, a facsimile of which is here appended. Price, 1 ct. each; in lots of 100 to 1,000, 60 cts. per hundred; 1,000 to 5,000, 45 cts. per hundred. Discount to dealers and agents.



Augustana Book Concern announces **The Great Victory**, an Easter Program for the Sunday-school. Compiled by *Rev. E. C. Blomquist*. Contains responsive readings, hymns with music, and recitations. 10 cts.; less in quantities. D.

The United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia: —

When Christ Comes. *Rev. Paul J. Gerberding, B. D.,* with an Introduction by *Prof. Holmes Dysinger, D. D.* XIV and 155 pp., 5×7½. \$1.35.

This book is a treatise on the Last Things, and it purposes to set before the reader the whole teaching of Scripture on Eschatology, by presenting the various Scripture-passages, dealing with this important subject, so that he may judge for himself what the Bible teaches with regard to the Second Coming of Christ and the events connected therewith. Under the different heads the author sets forth: The Second Coming of Christ, The Resurrection, The Judgment, Eternal Life, Hell, and Heaven. It is to be pitied that the writer does not always set forth Scriptural doctrine. There are, in his explanatory statements, sentences and passages which evidently do not express what the author meant to say; and on page 115, after stating: "We wish to allow Scripture to speak for itself," he presents views that are strikingly anti-Scriptural. It is a pity that such defects should mar a book that otherwise is so very clear, sane, and true to the Word of God.

MUELLER.

Geo. H. Doran Company, New York: —

A National System of Education. *Walter Scott Athearn*, Director of the Department of Religious Education and Social Service in Boston University. Author of *The Church School*, *Religious Education and American Democracy*. VIII and 122 pages. Illustrated with fourteen graphic diagrams.

Of all the weighty subjects that confront the American people to-day, the one pertaining to the education of our children is no doubt the foremost. It is a fact, universally conceded, that the present system of public education has been a failure. The schools, in spite of every effort made and of every method tried out, have not produced that type of citizen, that embodiment of true culture of which American educators may be justly proud. Intellectually, economically, and morally the system of education has been found wanting. Accordingly, there is now under way a new system of national education, elaborated by our foremost educators and supported by the National Educational Association, which, both educationally and politically, endeavors to have this new plan adopted and converted to universal use. "In their statesmanlike program Professor Athearn sees a challenge to the educational leadership of the Church to produce a plan that will be equally scientific, equally democratic, and equally prophetic, and such a program he has presented in the chapters of this book." These words which introduce the book clearly point out its tendency and purpose, which is to show how in the new system of national education there may be embodied a new national system of *religious education*, in which all the Protestant churches of our country cooperate. We cannot go into detail, but would recommend the book to the earnest study of all our Lutheran pastors, teachers, and school boards, who in this crisis ought to acquaint themselves with the aims, purposes, and methods of those who are opposing our parochial schools. The attitude of the author towards the parochial schools is one of unconcealed hostility. On page 70 he stigmatizes them as unpatriotic and undemocratic. Also, we may read between the lines that the religion to be taught, if the new system of national religious education be adopted, is not, and cannot be, that which is now being taught to our children. There are several statements that show how determined men like Professor Athearn are in their endeavor to have their system put to general use. On page 114 we read; "It is *the duty of all the religious bodies* to send their children to the public schools." On page 117: "It has already been demonstrated that the largest branches of the Protestant Church *can* agree upon a common curriculum for week-day religious schools, reserving certain special denominational instruction for the Sunday session of their local church-schools." On page 117: "*Democracy has a right*, in the interest of its own perpetuity, *to compel* this form of cooperation of its schools with the schools of all religious bodies." On page 120: "Protestant Christianity *should* put itself on record as the ardent champion of the public schools." On page 31: "Each religious denomination has, *as its greatest present responsibility*, the development of an efficient system of church-schools (Sunday-schools) and the *correlation of these schools with those of other denominations, into a unified system of religious education* for the

American people. On page 31: "The national public school system *must* be supplemented by a unified system of religious education which will guarantee the *spiritual homogeneity of our democracy*." On page 119: "The united strength of Protestant Christianity *should be used* to promote the provisions of the Smith-Towner Bill."

MUELLER.

The Problem of the Pentateuch. A New Solution by Archeological Methods. *Melvin Grove Kyle, D. D., LL. D.* Bibliotheca Sacra Co., Oberlin, O. 1920. 289 pp., 6×9¼. \$2.15.

Prof. Kyle, who holds the chair of archeology in Xenia Seminary, St. Louis, in this volume meets Higher Criticism on its own ground. Let us rather say, a master of Higher Criticism — for "Higher Criticism" is simply literary criticism — here rises in defense of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.

As is well known, the destructive school of critics depends for its hypotheses on minute investigations into the literary form of the Biblical writings. In Prof. Kyle's book an investigation into the literary form of the Pentateuch is instituted which produces a result widely different from the conclusions of unbelieving scholars.

Following a clue which modern scholarship has received from Harold M. Wiener, Dr. Kyle concentrates his attention upon the various kinds of law contained in the Pentateuch. He finds there judgments, statutes, and commandments. Bible readers are apt to believe that these are simply synonymous terms. Dr. Kyle shows that they are not. Judgments, *mishpatim*, are in reality, as the name indicates, "judgings," decisions of judges, which had come to be recognized to be just and equitable and thus accepted as common law. The promulgating of them with the authority of God made them the laws of God, but put forth no claim of novelty in them, exactly as the Decalog is God's moral law, although it announced some things well known before among many other peoples. . . . They (the 'judgments') are in all cases laws 'one with another,' either one individual with another individual, or an individual with the congregation, the community, or the state." The statutes, *khuqqim*, are another type of laws. The *khoq* is a "decree," and so a "statutory regulation." Infringement of the statutes was not a thing wrong in itself, *mala in se*, as was an infringement of the judgments, but wrong only because of the statute, *mala prohibita*. The statutes, then, in their entirety constitute "that wonderful ceremonial system, the symbolical sacrifices and ceremonies, and all the religious and hygienic and sociological regulations of the people of Israel." The commandments, *mitsoth*, again have a technical significance. This term is always employed to denote the laws of the Decalog. Prof. Kyle now lists every verse in which these three terms occur, and his conclusion is stated as follows: "Every instance of the use of these technical law terms, 'commandments,' 'statutes,' and 'judgments,' has been considered, and the *discriminating use* of these terms has been found to be everywhere maintained."

Prof. Kyle now points out that the literary form of the Mosaic writings is determined by the kind of laws which are embodied in the narrative.

The judgments are brief, terse in form, suitable for memorizing. All the people were presumed to know the "common law" of the covenant nation. The statutes are descriptive. They embodied those laws of the theocracy which the priesthood were to regard as their specialty. In Deuteronomy we have a literary form differing from that of the other four books. "In Deuteronomy we have the hortatory form of expression by which all these various kinds of laws, but especially those pertaining to the civil and political life of the people, were set forth in public addresses by the great lawgiver to stir up in their minds a more lively conception of the laws already given, and to give greater impulse toward righteous activity in Israel as they were about to enter the Promised Land." Thus the peculiar literary character of Deuteronomy (a stronghold of negative criticism) is accounted for. However, the distinction of the three technical terms is fully observed also in Deuteronomy. It is clear that this distinctly speaks against the source-hypotheses, which represents Deuteronomy as pieced together by various editors. Prof. Kyle pertinently asks: "How can the Deuteronomists, on that theory, have observed this distinction in technical terms?" According to the document-theory the P Codex with its statutes had not yet been written when Deuteronomy originated!

The author traces the distinction of judgments, statutes, and commandments also in the other Old Testament books. It is present in the writings which originated in the days of David and Solomon, and the author concludes: "The technical use of these words at that epoch of Israel's history shows that the Law which contains them was known at that time, and so is fatal to the view that this Law with its technical terms originated in the 'P Document' at the time of the Exile or later."

The reader will understand that Dr. Kyle's book is a very technical work. But precisely this is its strength. Its technique is that of Higher Criticism, but its conclusions negative the results, so-called, of the Biblical scholarship now in vogue. There are several chapters less technical in character. The author gives a summary of his earlier work, "Moses and the Monuments," in chapter 7, and discusses "Historical Difficulties and Discrepancies in the Pentateuch" in chapter 8.

As for the cogency of Prof. Kyle's reasoning, we shall say that, while we may expect no revision of opinion among critics of the naturalistic school, it certainly constitutes an argument which can only be answered by refutation in detail, and this seems to be definitely excluded by the comprehensive induction of Prof. Kyle's book.

We were interested in a point made on page 95 with reference to the First and Third Commandments. The prohibition of the use of images and the law concerning the Sabbath are both "long and very explicit in their enunciation of detail," — more like the statutes, hence, in agreement with the Lutheran position, these two laws appear to classify not with *mitsoth* (commandments in the specific sense), but with the *khuggim* (statutes); in other words, are also by their literary form recognizable as part of the ceremonial law.

GRAEBNER.